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CONFUCIANISM AND THE NEW CHINA

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Confucianism, with its elaborate ritual, its bloody sacrifices, its antiquated symbolism, and its fine ethical teaching, has again been made the State religion of China. Several recent mandates by the President, Yüan Shih-k'ai, have restored to it in the school, in the civil service, and in the army, the authority which previous to the revolution it had held almost uninterruptedly for two thousand years.

It is easy to misunderstand the significance of this action. It has been condemned as thoroughly reactionary, and an abridgment of the religious liberty guaranteed by the constitution of the Republic. The President in offering the sacrifices has been accused of aping the Emperor, and the re-establishment of the State religion is said to portend the return to a monarchical form of government.

The suspicions implied in these charges appear at first glance to be not unreasonable; but a more careful examination of the facts will show that the restoration of Confucianism to its old-time status has no necessary connection with any imperial aspirations that may be entertained by the President, and is not intended to abridge the constitutional rights of the adherents of other faiths, but has its origin in quite other and laudable though perhaps mistaken motives.

When the China-Japanese war of 1894 and 1895 had revealed to the Peking Government the utter weakness of the country, the inability of its three hundred and

twenty millions to cope with a nation of only one-eighth of its population, the wise men in the capital and the provinces began to seek for the source of this weakness. They discovered that the material civilization of the West, the despised learning of the "barbarians," had made Japan powerful in arms, and one Viceroy, Chang Chih-tung, had the courage in his yamen at Wuchang to write a pamphlet on the "new learning," urging the Imperial Court to accept the lesson of the war and, by mastering the sciences of the western world, acquire the ability to equip itself with the modern engines of war and the machinery for developing the resources of the country, and thus prepare to defend its heritage. In that pamphlet, however, he pointed out what he believed to be the defect of the western system of education, that is to say, its neglect of moral training. He feared that the study of the western sciences might lead to a neglect of the sacred books of Confucianism and their ethical teachings, and thus to a deterioration in morals. He warned the Government therefore against the abandonment of the national religion. His tract stirred the minds of many, but it had very little practical effect at the time.

Two years later, in 1898, the aggressive action of Germany, Russia, France, and Great Britain, each of whom had demanded and obtained from China the lease of a port, followed later by attempts to define spheres of interest in China for their respective nationals, led to a discussion of the possible partition of China. This excited intense indignation in the breasts of the Chinese people. Thereupon a patriotic society, mis-called "the Boxers," was organized. Its original aim was the overthrow of the Manchu dynasty, whose degenerate representatives in the Forbidden City were held responsible for the defenceless condition of the Empire and the consequent aggression of the western

powers. With considerable skill the Manchu rulers were able to divert these attacks upon the Government and persuade the "Boxer" leaders to direct their efforts towards the punishment of the offending foreigners. The humiliating defeat of China, the flight of the Court, and the hard terms made by the victorious allies, aroused even the most stupid and reactionary officials to a realization of the inefficiency of their government and the urgent need of reform.

It had been a common saying among the Chinese that the men of the West were very clever in their invention of machinery but that they lacked culture. The Court still affected to despise the learning of the foreigner as being of an inferior sort; but since the culture of China could not save it, two reforms were immediately projected—military reorganization, and the establishment of a public school system. With the former we are not particularly concerned. The task of arranging a course of public instruction and submitting regulations for the control of the schools was intrusted to the two foremost scholars of the Empire—Chang Chih-tung, the Viceroy mentioned above, and Chang Po-hsi, a Cabinet Minister in Peking. Previous to this undertaking there had been no public school system in China, but a system of public examinations only. Education had been left to private enterprise.

The report of the two Commissioners was made in 1904 and filled eight volumes. It provided a complete system of instruction, beginning with the kindergarten and crowned by a national university. Place was made too for special schools, such as those for teaching handicrafts and for preparing students to enter the learned professions. In the regulations submitted, the Viceroy of the Hukuang Provinces was able to embody the recommendations which he had offered and which had been rejected in 1896. The sciences of the West were

given a prominent place in the curriculum; but great stress was laid upon the need of supplementing this instruction with a thorough course in the Chinese sacred scriptures and by a regular observance of the rites of the national religion. The schools were required, therefore, to make provision for the worship by the students at stated times of the great sage, Confucius.

The report of the two Changs received the approval of the vermilion pencil; but the old system of public examinations for admission to the civil service still remained, and so long as this door to official preferment was left open, the new school system received scant recognition, for education was not made compulsory. In 1906, therefore, the old-time examinations were abolished and the new schools began to be opened everywhere.

In order to provide still more carefully against any abandonment of the literature and religion of China, the Government in 1907 issued a decree establishing at Chüfu¹—the birthplace and burial-place of Confucius—a college for the study of the sacred books, in order that there might never be a lack of classical scholars able to interpret these books and to give ethical instruction to the young. At the same time by another decree the rank of Confucius in the pantheon was raised and the same sacrifices ordered to be made to his spirit as were offered to the Most High. This latter edict may have been suggested perhaps by the teaching of the Christian missionaries with respect to their Teacher, who was held to be one with God and was worshipped as a divine being.

A few months after the issue of these two decrees, Duke Yen, the lineal descendant of Confucius in the seventy-sixth generation, came to Peking to make

¹ Chüfu is a small town in the heart of Shantung Province, and is to be distinguished from the treaty port, Chefoo, in the same province.

acknowledgment to the Empress Dowager of his gratitude for the honor done to his ancestor, and while kneeling in audience begged Her Imperial Majesty to transform the proposed school at Chüfu, his home, into a college for the teaching of foreign languages, the sciences, international law, and political economy. The request did credit to his mind, but it was of course refused. The proposed classical school was, however, never established. This, like many other enterprises planned by the Manchus, remains to be accomplished by the Republic. The matter is under consideration now, a petition for the establishment of such a school having recently been sent to the President.

The transfer of Confucius to the first rank in the Chinese pantheon made necessary a revision of the ritual used in his worship. This work had just been done, and the temple to the sage in Peking was being improved when the revolution broke out.

The immediate effect of the revolution upon religion was not unlike that which was seen at Paris at the beginning of the French Revolution. The sacrifices to Confucius at the capital and in the provinces were neglected. The temples were abandoned. Their courts grew up in weeds, left, as one writer laments, to be gathered by the peasants for fuel. The Temple of Heaven, the most sacred enclosure in China, which had never been entered by Manchu or Chinese except by the Emperor, the nobles and highest officials with their attendants, was thrown open to the populace. Ribald inscriptions were chalked upon the walls, and the high marble altar, dedicated to the worship of the Most High God, was desecrated by the erection of booths thereon for the sale of food, cigarettes, and other articles. The Temple to the Earth was converted into a barracks, and the Field of God, which the Emperor ploughed in person and planted with grain to be offered upon the State altars,

became a show ground for acrobats and jugglers, while the hall of the Year Star was turned into a museum where the sacred vessels of the sanctuary were exhibited to the curious upon payment of an admission fee of two cents. Protests were not wanting of course, but they met with little notice at first. One of the leaders of the revolution declared that the Republic had nothing to do with religion. The Government seriously considered the proposal to convert the Temple of Heaven, which contains 737 acres, into an agricultural experiment station.

It was not the State religion alone that suffered; the Buddhist and Taoist temples also shared in the neglect and profanation. In some cities the idols were taken out and thrown into the rubbish heaps and the halls put to use as schoolrooms.

Gradually, however, the protests against the neglect and desecration of the altars grew louder and more numerous. After a year of irreligion, accompanied by considerable immorality, a reaction began to be evident. Some urged the re-establishment of Confucianism as the State religion; others advocated the adoption of Buddhism. One of the most ardent supporters of the latter proposal was a monk, known as Ming Ching, Abbot of a monastery in the southwestern part of the Tartar City of Peking. He was a brilliant scholar and joint author of a history in Chinese of the Buddhist religion in India, China, and Japan. He had studied in Japan, where he had adopted the views of the reformed Buddhists,² who have endeavored to adjust the teachings of Buddha to the conditions of the modern world. In

²In Japan known as the Shin Jodo or New Jodo, an offshoot of the Jodo, in Chinese pronounced Ching T'u, the Pure Land Sect established in China in the second century of our era and introduced into Japan in the thirteenth century. The New Jodo dates from 1262 A.D. The Pure Land Sect is the most popular of Buddhist sects in China. The reformed branch in Japan, that is to say, the New Jodo, permits the marriage of the clergy and the eating of meat, and otherwise adapts itself to modern conditions. Travellers in Japan often attend its services at the Nishi Hongwanji in Kyoto.

1906 he opened at his own expense two modern schools in Peking where the new government curriculum was taught. At the same time he endeavored unsuccessfully to organize a committee representative of all religions—Christian, Mohammedan, Taoist, Confucianist, and Buddhist—to promote friendly relations and adjust any difficulties that might arise among their various adherents. In 1912 he was influential in organizing a society for the promotion of Buddhism, which petitioned the Republican Parliament to establish that religion as the State religion. He had already lost his sight when this movement was inaugurated, and a year later, weakened by age and saddened by his blindness, he laid down his work and entered his nirvana.

The Buddhist society is still doing much to revive Buddhism in China, but the Government paid slight attention to its efforts to make that religion the official religion of the State. The Confucianists were more successful.

Lest it may be thought that the movement for the restoration of Confucianism is merely a political one, originating with those in authority and engineered by them for their own selfish purposes, it is important to emphasize the fact that the protagonist of the cause is Ch'en Huang-chang, a graduate of the University of California and a Doctor of Philosophy of Columbia University, a man who has never held office either under the Empire or the Republic. Among all who were shocked by the abandonment of the Confucian altars, no one was more earnest than he in efforts to restore the religion to its old-time status. He gathered about him a few men of like mind and organized the Confucian Association. Being a native of the province of Chekiang, he endeavored first to interest the officials and gentry of that region. Later he spent much time in Peking, where his high standing as a graduate of an

American university gave him considerable influence among the progressive young men who came to the front during the revolution. The sympathy of many in high official position was enlisted, but the movement itself was entirely non-official. By the end of 1912 Dr. Ch'en had enrolled in the Association men of every province in the Republic. Branch societies were established in the provincial capitals and in most other important cities. In 1913 the publication was begun of a monthly magazine, called *The Confucian Association Monthly*, a very creditable review of 150 pages.

The Association and its branches then began a campaign to influence the Government. Telegrams from all parts of the country poured into Peking, some addressed to the President, more of them to the two houses of Parliament, which were in session throughout the greater part of that year. The supporters of the movement were found not only among the gentry but among the merchants as well. Many of the chambers of commerce became interested and added their appeals to those of the associations. In so far as it is possible for any cause to have popular support in a country where so few are educated, the effort to make Confucianism the established religion of the Republic may be said to represent a very general desire among the people. Even the masses of the people, uneducated though they may be, are accustomed to observe in their family and social relations the ceremonies and regulations prescribed by Confucianism, and they have a jealous regard for the name and the teachings of the great sage. There is no doubt but that the Republic would be discredited in the eyes of the people if it should appear that the worship required by the old State religion was to be permanently abandoned and all the traditions of the past forgotten.

It was not difficult, therefore, to win the support of the officials for the programme of the Association. The

Governor of Chekiang was one of the first to yield to the request of so influential an organization. He is a young man of far more than ordinary ability, who came suddenly into prominence during the revolution and made himself Governor of his native province. He was quick to see that the Republic would overcome much of the passive resistance of the people against which it had to struggle, if it could appear to be no less pious than the Empire and just as ardent in its attachment to the old religion which for a hundred generations had held the affections of their forefathers. Governor Chu's telegram to the Senate and House of Representatives contains about eight hundred Chinese characters and cannot therefore be given in full in this article. His argument is that without the restraints of religion men are no better than wild beasts in their relations one with another; that no nation ever existed without a religion; that China has been especially blest by Heaven in being the birthplace of Confucius; that in the ancient scriptures edited by him are found all the principles of modern philosophy, science, law, and other branches of learning; that Sakyamuni, Jesus, and Mohammed, although unhampered, made no such record; that modern scholarship casts no doubt upon the teachings of Confucius; that Confucianism is the only national religion in China, and that its overthrow would mean the relaxation of all the social restraints and the increase of vice and crime; that truth and virtue would not be able to flourish, and, although men might talk of military and financial reform, disorders and corruption would inevitably increase, "liberty, equality, and fraternity" become impossible, and the Republic cease to exist.

He begs Parliament to behold the desecration of the sacred places, and prays it to heed the petition of the Confucian Association and restore Confucianism to its former position of authority as the State religion. He

appeals to the respect which the members of Parliament must feel for the tomb of Confucius, and declares that the restoration of his religion will mean the triumph of truth and the suppression of violence.

The great leader of the abortive attempt at reform in 1898, K'ang Yu-wei, also pleaded for the restoration of the old religion, saying that, although Christianity taught the worship of God and the love of man, it could never hope to persuade the four hundred millions of Chinese to abandon the worship of their ancestors.

One of the telegrams addressed to the President urged that the worship of Confucius in the schools be made compulsory. To this the President replied in a mandate issued on June 22d, 1913, in which he approved of the restoration of Confucianism as the State religion, but declined to acquiesce in the proposal of the telegram until he could obtain the opinions of the various provincial authorities. He took occasion, however, to point out that the monarchy, in order to bolster up its authority, had emphasized one side only of the teaching of the sage—the right of the sovereign to command and the duty of the subject to obey; whereas this relationship was subordinated by the great teacher himself to the establishment of justice, which is the most essential bond of society. He declared that this partial teaching had resulted in arbitrary government, oppression, and violence.

He noted too that this misinterpretation of the Confucian teaching had led some to doubt the fitness of that religion to become the State religion of the Republic, and that it had induced them recklessly to propose the abolition of the sacrifices. He endeavored to show that Confucius, in pointing out the disorders of past periods as recorded in the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, had directed attention to the wickedness of absolute rulers, and had intimated that popular government was

the original form of government. "The aromatic spirits poured out to the sage in libation," he declares, "are old, but their fragrance is none the less still pleasing to-day. Heaven's ancient gift to the world of Confucius was not meant merely for that distant age but for all times. It was a gift that foreshadowed the end of monarchical rule and the coming of a day when the virtuous and capable should have dominion through their election by the will of the people." He referred also to the extravagant notions of the radicals who had precipitated the rising of 1913, as being opposed to the will of the people. "So long as the sun and moon endure, so long as the rivers and streams continue to flow," he affirms, "so long shall the Republic preserve the sovereignty of the people; for there can never be union nor peace while the desire for liberty is unsatisfied. The rebellious seem to think that non-conformity is equality and that lack of reverence is liberty. There is but one way of preserving the State—the way of religion, morality, and economy." It was to the restoration of religion that he looked, he said, for the correction of men's hearts and the moulding of their conduct, and through this he hoped for the preservation of the Republic. A later mandate was issued making the study of the sacred books obligatory in the public schools and urging the observance of the old religion as essential to the moral training of the young.

The work of the Confucian Association culminated in the assembling of a great national convention in September, 1913, at Chüfu, Shantung, the ancient home of Confucius and the site of his tomb. This was probably the first time in history that such a convention was ever held, and its significance is increased by the fact that it was summoned not by national or provincial authority but entirely independent of the Government, by the action of private citizens interested in the preser-

vation of their ancient faith. The convention met, according to the old calendar, on the 24th day of the Eighth Moon in the 2,464th Year of Confucius, that is to say, September 24th, 1913. The 27th day of that moon is the traditional birthday of the sage. This was the high day of the festival, which lasted a week, closing on the last day of the moon. Duke Yen, of whom I have spoken above, the head of the Confucian family, attended the meetings and participated in the discussions. The autumn sacrifice to Confucius was offered in Peking that year and in many of the provincial capitals, but the President did not participate until the vernal equinox of 1914.

The return to the ancient practices of the religion has been quite gradual and is not yet entirely accomplished. Probably there never will be a complete return. A change of dynasty has often been accompanied by a modification of the ritual. In the present case the abandonment of the monarchical form of government calls for a more marked revision. The modification thus far made is announced to be a return to the simpler forms of ancient times while as yet the sceptre was not hereditary. It was not until the winter solstice of 1914 that the great service at the Altar to Heaven was resumed. This service was conducted by the President in person, and seems to have lacked somewhat the impressiveness that attended the worship by the Emperor under the old régime.

Under the Empire civil officials worshipped in the temple of Confucius; the military were required to attend in the temple of the so-called God of War. This was a deified warrior, Kuan Yu.³ Another hero of an-

³ Kuan Yu was a distinguished military leader in the period known as that of the Three Kingdoms, near the close of the second century of our era. He was canonized in the twelfth century, and near the close of the Ming Dynasty in the sixteenth century was raised to the rank of the gods as Kuan Ti, the title by which he is commonly known to-day.

cient times worshipped by the soldier was Yo Fei.⁴ The worship of these two patron saints of the military class has recently been restored. On the 6th of March, 1915, the Ministry of War at Peking issued instructions to all commanders of troops both in Peking and in the provinces, to the effect that henceforth all officers and men in the army and in the navy must present themselves at the temple of Kuan Yu and Yo Fei to take the oath of allegiance to the President as Commander-in-chief of the Army and Navy of the Republic. This order was issued in response to a recommendation of the Governor of Chekiang. The latter, however, requested that other heroes of the past might be added to the list to be worshipped, but the Council of State objected and the President sustained the objection.

These mandates of President Yüan Shih-k'ai, restoring the State sacrifices, have met with considerable hostile criticism from those who are not Confucianists, particularly the Christians and their missionary friends. The chief objections urged are two: first that the State sacrifices were a part of the monarchical system, that the offering to Heaven in particular could only be made by the Emperor as the Son of Heaven, and that the restoration of this service, therefore, will be regarded by the people as an assumption of the Imperial dignity by Yüan Shih-k'ai; secondly, that the establishment of a State religion necessarily places the adherents of other faiths under certain disabilities, and to that extent abridges the freedom of worship guaranteed by the constitution.

To the first objection it is replied that the ancient theory of government in China was that the Emperor

⁴ Yo Fei was a general during the closing years of the Sung Dynasty, and distinguished himself in service against the Kin Tartars. He was finally put to death by his Emperor at the instigation of a Minister of State who desired to make peace with the Tartars. Yo Fei has ever since been regarded as a martyr by the Chinese. He was canonized in the thirteenth century.

derived his authority from the consent of the governed, that the mandate of Heaven was given to him who was chosen by the will of the people. The ancient Classic of History says: "Heaven sees as the people see; Heaven hears as the people hear." It is held, therefore, that the Emperor worshipped the Most High as the representative of the people, and that, if an Emperor could so represent the people, a President elected by the people was much better qualified to officiate in that capacity. Hence in issuing his proclamation for the revival of the worship at the Altar to Heaven at the winter solstice of 1914, President Yüan said:

"Since the revolution, all kinds of opinions have been expressed. Some have said that the worship of Heaven originated with the monarchy and that the sacrifices ought not to be retained by the Republic. . . . As a result, the sacrifice of bullocks has been neglected and the altars made a heap of ruins. . . . 'Heaven sees as the people see; Heaven hears as the people hear.' Anything which the people ask will be granted by Heaven. Therefore in ancient times the sovereigns governed the people in the name of Heaven. Such a sentiment corresponds exactly with the spirit of republicanism. . . . The 23d of December will be the winter solstice, at which time the ceremonies attending the worship of Heaven should be observed. On that day, therefore, I, the President, will engage in this service in person at the head of the national officials of the Republic in the capacity of the representative of the people. The local authorities, as representatives of the people whom they govern, are hereby directed to offer sacrifices in their respective localities. Thus the ancient tradition will be preserved and great blessing from Heaven may be anticipated."

As to the second objection, the President has repeatedly given assurance that full religious liberty will be preserved, and it has been pointed out very forcibly by those who have urged the restoration of the State worship that a State establishment does not mean that any one is to be coerced into an observance of the State rites; that England, for instance, supports an Established Church, and that, notwithstanding this, every

man in England is permitted to worship according to his own convictions and suffers from no political disabilities.

There has been misunderstanding upon both sides with respect to this controversy. Some Christian missionaries have feared that their converts would be placed at a disadvantage in competing for official honors, and the Confucianists have thought that the Christians were unwilling for the Confucian rites to be observed at all. What the Christians have opposed is the support of the religion by the State and the offering of the sacrifices by the officials, since conceivably some Christian chosen to office would be unable conscientiously to engage in such worship. Thus the Christians would labor under disabilities. It is to be remembered, however, that Confucianism has no paid ministry or priesthood, and that the sacrifices have always been offered by the officials and paid for by the State. There exists no organization that can take over this service, so that, unless the State does make provision for it, the costly public worship must cease.

That the Government has no desire to compel anyone against his will to participate in the Confucian worship is shown by the action taken in the case of the military and naval officers who recently declined to worship at the temple of Kuan Yu and Yo Fei as commanded in the order mentioned above. The President, when informed of their unwillingness, immediately issued an order permitting those who could not conscientiously engage in such worship to take the oath of allegiance in accordance with the rites of their own religion. The Christian officers thereupon met together and drew up a ritual for observance at the Altar to the Most High in the Temple of Heaven, and there with Christian ceremonies they gave their allegiance to the President. It still remains true, however, that a Christian will be ineligible to the

Presidency so long as the offering of the Confucian sacrifices is made an obligation of that office. But to be fair to the Chinese we should not forget that, despite the religious liberty of the British, the heir to the British throne at once becomes ineligible if he finds himself unable to accept the Protestant faith. The question of Christian ineligibility to the Presidency is of course at present merely an academic one, for the Christians in China as yet constitute an insignificant part of the whole population; but their number is increasing rapidly and they already occupy in the public service positions of great influence and importance out of all proportion to their numbers.

In view of the facts recited it seems worth while to consider what there is in Confucianism that gives it such a hold upon the affections of the Chinese people, what relation the religion sustains to their moral standards, what adaptability it shows to the needs of modern life, whether or not there are any elements in it worth preserving. Confucianism profoundly influences the life of every individual in China. As a child the Chinese is taught to bow reverently to the tablet of the sage when he enters and leaves the schoolroom. The sacred scriptures edited by Confucius are the text-books given him to study, and these he learns by heart. The ritual prescribes the ceremonies to be observed when he attains his majority, the worship of Heaven and Earth and his ancestors when he is married, the solemn service of mourning for the dead, the offerings to be made in the hall at the winter solstice and those at the grave in the spring. As a member of the community he joins in the service at the Confucian temple at the new and the full moon and particularly at the vernal and autumnal equinoxes. As an official he must sacrifice not only to the great teacher and his disciples, but he must worship also at the local altar to the spirits of the land and the

harvest, and in the temples to the various patron saints and heroes of the State. Like other religions, Confucianism has its private and its public worship; those suited to the individual, or rather the family life, and those intended for the community and the nation.

The public worship, particularly at the State altars in Peking, is very impressive. The spiritual beings who receive this homage from the State were divided under the late Manchu dynasty into three ranks. In the first rank were placed Shang Ti or the Most High God, the Imperial Ancestors, the Earth and the Guardian Spirits of the Land and the Harvests. Since the establishment of the Republic the imperial ancestors are of course omitted. In 1907, as stated above, Confucius, formerly placed in the second rank, was raised to the first grade, and still retains that position, receiving the same worship as that paid to the Most High. In the second rank were the Sun and Moon, the sovereigns of earlier dynasties, the patron saint of Agriculture, the patroness of Sericulture, and the Year Star, i.e., Jupiter. In the third rank were the patron saint of Medicine, the God of War, the God of Literature, the North Star, the Eastern Peak—i.e., Mt. T'ai in Shantung—the tutelary of Peking, the Gods of Fire and Artillery, the patron of Mechanic Arts, the God of the Furnace, the God of the Granary, and a multitude of other deities and saints increasing from generation to generation.

The religious calendar was determined by the Court of Sacrificial Worship with great care and announced a year in advance. This was made necessary by the fact that until 1912 China used a lunar calendar. The College of Astronomy had therefore to prepare an almanac showing when the winter and summer solstices would occur, whether or not there would be an intercalary moon, if so, when it was to be added, how many days were to be allowed to each month in the next year, and the exact

time when the new and full moons would occur; so that, while the times and seasons for sacrifice were known in a general way, the exact dates had to be determined.

Worship of the various gods and saints consisted in bathing, fasting, prostrations, prayers and thanksgiving, offerings of incense, lighted candles, gems, fruits, cooked food, salted vegetables and shew bread, libations of wine, sacrifices of whole oxen, sheep, and pigs, sometimes of deer and other game, and on certain occasions a burnt sacrifice of a whole bullock. The worship was accompanied by music and posturing or dancing. All sacrifices of the first grade had to be preceded by three days of fasting; those of the second grade by two days of abstinence. Warning notices were posted in all the palaces and yamens throughout the country. Fasting did not mean entire abstinence from food, but from flesh and strong-smelling vegetables, such as garlic, leeks, and onions, and also from wine and all strong drink. No criminal proceedings were to be held by the courts, and no invitations to feasts issued or accepted. There could be no music, no inquiries after the sick, and no mourning for the dead. One was especially forbidden to enter the death chamber of a woman, to sacrifice to the spirits of the family, or to visit the tombs. All association with the sick and the mourner was forbidden to those participating in the State worship. These prohibitions remind us of those enforced in connection with the Hebrew sacrifices, which forbade Aaron and his sons to drink any wine or strong drink when about to go into the tabernacle, and warned them not to mourn for the dead when serving there. The prayers offered were written and read and then burned. Those offered at the Altar to Heaven were written on blue paper in vermilion ink. This practice still prevails under the Republic.

Color, form, and number all play an important part in the construction of the temples and their furniture and in all the ceremonies connected with the worship. The prevailing color at the Temple of Heaven is blue—the azure of the sky. But the word for blue which is used is one of those primitive words which may mean blue or green. Primitive man evidently considered these as two shades of one color, for we find that in several languages one word is used for both colors. The Chinese word *Ch'ing* may mean the blue of the sky or the green of the grass. The jade emblem offered to Shang Ti is translated “the azure jade,” but can just as well be translated green jade, and as a matter of fact the piece in use in recent years is green. The tiles of the pavilions at the Altar to Heaven are blue, but those on some of the other buildings in the temple are green; the silk offered is blue, and all the pottery is of a blue color. Yellow, the color of the soil in North China, is the prevailing color at the Temple of the Earth, and the gem offered is yellow. The prayer is written on yellow paper and the silk offered is yellow. Red is the prevailing color at the Altar to the Sun, and the gem is red, as is the silk also. The prayer is written on vermillion paper. At the Altar to the Moon the gem and the silk are white. The Sheh Chi T'ang, or the Altar to the Spirits of the Land and the Harvest, is peculiar in that it is made of soil of five colors: yellow in the centre, blue on the east, red on the south, white on the west, and black on the north. The glazed brick walls surrounding the court of the altar are colored in the same way. You will note that these are the five colors of the new Chinese flag. They are what the Chinese regard as the primary colors. The flag, however, is not a new one, but was often seen on Chinese gunboats long before the revolution. Originally it had no relation to the five races. The arrangement of colors is

as old as Chinese history and is mentioned in the Book of History. The five colors are correlated with the five directions—north, south, east, west, and centre; with the five tones of the old pentatonic scale, and with the five virtues—mercy, justice, piety, wisdom, and sincerity. Since the establishment of the Republic this combination of colors has been given a new symbolical meaning and made to represent the five races included in the Republic—Chinese, Manchu, Mongol, Turki, and Tibetan.

The circle is appropriate to Heaven; hence the Altar to Heaven and all its vessels are round. In the old cosmogony the earth was considered square, and so the Altar to the Earth and all its vessels are square. Odd numbers belong to Heaven and even ones to earth. Three is the key-number of the Temple of Heaven. There are three terraces on the altar, three flag-staffs, three times three steps from the ground to the first terrace and from one terrace to another, three times three stones in the first circle of paving stones around the central stone of the top terrace, and a multiple of three in each circle. There were three times three kotows⁶ in the worship there, three times three pieces of music, and three sorts of beings worshipped—Heaven, Earth, and Man. Four and eight are the prevailing numbers at the Altar to the Earth, seven at the Altar to the Sun, and six at that to the Moon. Direction, posture, and time also have their meaning. At the Altar to Heaven one worships toward the north, the side of darkness, on the longest night in the year; at the Altar to the Earth, on the longest day in the year, in the daylight and facing the south; at the Altar to the Sun in the spring at sunrise facing the east, and after sunset in autumn at the Altar to the Moon, facing the west.

⁶ The recent revision of the ritual by the Republic appears to have ignored this numerical symbolism, since the three kneelings and nine kotows have been replaced by four bows.

Color, direction, posture, and the use of gems, as we know, are all common to many religions. We have but to mention the cardinal's robe and the bishop's purple; the worship of the Moslems towards Mecca, of the Jews towards Jerusalem, and of many Christians towards the east; the orientation of many churches; the use of gems in the ephod of the Jewish High Priest and in the bishop's ring, and the play upon numbers in ecclesiastical architecture and liturgy.

The sacrifice of animals, accompanied by offerings of wine and incense, lighted lamps or candles, and cooked food and fruits, is common to many religions. What was the meaning of animal sacrifice in the State religion of China? For that we must turn to the ancient Chinese classics: "Sacrifice is for prayer, for thanksgiving, and to ward off calamity." So we read in the *Book of Rites*. It has been said that there is no idea of expiation in Chinese sacrifice but only that of propitiation. This is probably correct; but we must remember that calamities, personal or national, in China are all regarded as punishments for sins committed, and the sacrifice is not merely a charm to ward off evil but is sometimes accompanied by a confession and intended to placate the divine being. Probably the conception of substitution did not occur to them, but there is a significant passage in the *Li Ki* which says, "The blood was offered because it contained the life (or breath)." This is a near approach to the passage in the book of Leviticus: "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls." It is to be noted too that a difference is to be made between the animals offered on the marble altar and those consumed on the altar of burnt offering. The former were a part of a sacrificial feast, a communion. The animals had to be without spot or blemish. The sacrifice to Shang

Ti was a young bullock. The killing was a matter of importance, and in all sacrifices of the first grade had to be witnessed by the Emperor in person or by his delegate. In the *Book of Rites* we read: "The sacrifice to God in the suburb is the highest act of worship; the offerings in the ancestral temple form the highest expression of human relationship." Just as in the Hebrew ritual "the bodies of those beasts whose blood was brought into the sanctuary by the High Priest for sin" "were burned without the camp," or, in later Jewish history, "outside the gate of the city," so also the bullock sacrificed at the Altar to Heaven as a solitary burnt offering to God was burned outside the city gate.

There has never been in China but one recognized altar to Shang Ti, the Most High God. To erect a second was as great an act of treason as among the Hebrews it was to raise an altar to Jehovah anywhere else than in Jerusalem. In both cases the worship of the Most High was centralized at the capital. The large park in the southern suburb of Peking known as the Temple of Heaven consists of a series of courts one within another. Admission to the outer court can be had only upon the west side. There are gates to the inner court on the east, west, and south, but none on the north, which the Chinese call the side of darkness. The inner court is divided into two sections. The northern contains the beautiful triple-roofed pavilion where prayers were offered every spring for a good harvest, but the most important part of the temple is the southern section. In the midst of this is a smaller court, the square court of the altar, within which is a circular court, containing the open, circular, white marble altar. This altar is composed of three terraces. Four flights of steps, one from each cardinal point of the compass, give ascent. On the topmost terrace, on its northern side, there was erected a tabernacle of boards fitted

together with tenons and sockets, which was in imperial days lined with yellow satin and covered outside with blue silk. Within this on a throne was placed the tablet inscribed with the words, "The Most High God of Imperial Heaven." The altar of burnt offering is in the southeast corner of the square court. It is built of green tiles and has steps for ascent on the east, west, and south.

On the day preceding the sacrifice the Emperor was carried in his palanquin from his palace to the temple. Every house and shop along his route was closed and curtains cut off all view from the cross-streets. Guards lined the street on either side, but all other persons were forbidden to use the street. The trains were forbidden to enter or leave the city, and a sabbath-like stillness prevailed in that quarter of the capital. The sacrifice was offered just before daylight. The Emperor had to enter the inner court on foot and from the south. Just outside the southern gate of the square court of the altar a tent was placed in which he exchanged his imperial dress for the high-priestly robe. On emerging he was met by attendants with ewer and basin and washed his hands before ascending the altar. The Jewish priests too, we remember, bathed in the laver before offering sacrifice. The circular court was filled with musicians and posturers. Bells, drums, cymbals, stringed and wind instruments, were arranged on either side of the central way. The Emperor ascended the high altar from the south, facing the north, as the Jewish High Priest also did when sacrificing in the temple. Five pedestals stood in the middle of the uppermost terrace. They were of white marble delicately carved. Upon the central one was the golden censer; on either side of it a golden candlestick. The outermost pair supported vases with gilded flowers. Just before the tabernacle of the Most High there was placed a trencher con-

taining the body of a bullock, flayed. A table at one side received the offerings of wine, jade, and silk; upon another the imperial prayer was placed. After the various offerings and libations, the prayer was read and the Emperor, kneeling, partook of the meat offering and wine, thus communing with the Most High and with his ancestors. When this service was completed, he faced the altar of burnt offering and watched the bullock there being consumed.

The service as conducted by the President last December made very few changes in this ritual. One published account, however, says that the burnt offering was omitted. It is to be noted too that the President did not leave his palace until the morning of the sacrifice, and drove there in a motor car.

In the very incomplete description of the Confucian worship just given certain similarities will have been noticed between the ceremonies of the Chinese and those of the ancient Hebrews; others might be pointed out. There is a strong temptation, therefore, to find some connection between them. If we accept the theory of the western origin of the Chinese, it is not difficult to believe that the two religions may have had a common origin; but we should not allow our desire to find a monotheism in ancient China to blind us to the real character of the Chinese State religion.

The relation of the Confucian religion to the moral standards of the people is a very intimate one. The Confucian classics, which are the sacred books, hold ever before the Chinese student a high ideal of character. Justice, mercy, self-denial, sincerity, moral courage, filial and fraternal affection—all these virtues are repeatedly emphasized. It aims to strengthen the three bonds of society—that is to say, those between parent and child, husband and wife, and between ruler and subject. Thus it seeks to provide peace in the home and order in the

State. It insists upon the worship of the spirits, but it teaches that virtuous living is a condition of acceptance with God. "The spirits are not always favorable," *The Classic of History* says; "they accept only the worship of the sincere." These scriptures teach that sickness, poverty, drought, pestilence, and war are all calamities sent as a punishment for sin. They tell us that "the ways of Shang Ti are not invariable. Upon the good he bestows blessings, upon the evil-doer he sends down calamities."

It is natural, therefore, for the Chinese to feel that the moral law finds its sanction in the national religion, and equally natural to fear that an abandonment of the national religion might lead to a deterioration in morals. When the moral standards of society are supposed to find their only sanction in religion, if that religion be abandoned, there is indeed grave danger that the less thoughtful will imagine that moral requirements have lost their authority. In such a society, unless there be stringent legislation and a strong public opinion to secure its enforcement, the individual without religion is apt to fall a prey to vice, social bonds to become relaxed, and government corrupt and inefficient.

On the whole, the influence of Confucianism has undoubtedly been beneficial. Its disestablishment would not, however, as its friends profess to believe, have necessarily meant the disintegration of society or the deterioration of the individual. The experience of the United States is just to the contrary. Religion is less formal and more powerful where it is supported not by State authority but by the free-will offerings of those who believe in it. Our country is not less religious than those which maintain established churches. The difficulty with the Confucianist has been that he cannot conceive of his religion as independent of the State. It is true that there is no organization at present except

the State, authorized to conduct its services; but the Confucian Association might have made itself such an organization, and Confucianism would undoubtedly be more influential if none but those who are its sincere adherents participated in its worship and contributed to its support. This was pointed out to Dr. Ch'en in the summer and autumn of 1913, but without effect. It might be difficult for the Confucian Association to bear the cost of the sacrifices, but these might well be abandoned. Judaism long since gave up its bloody sacrifices, yet its ethical influence is perhaps greater than ever before in its history. Dr. Ch'en contends that this might do for vegetarians, but not for meat-eaters; for he says if we omit the flesh from the sacrificial meal or communion, we withhold from those whom we worship that which we ourselves consider the most important article of diet for ourselves, that is to say, we are offering less than our best.

The feast is still today an important social function, and even in some Christian countries food is placed upon the graves of the departed upon the eve of All Souls' Day. But the progress of learning is leading men to more refined testimonials of their affection for the dead. China unfortunately has never had a prophet Micah to proclaim the worthlessness of forms and to sum up true worship in justice, mercy, and pity. There are, it is true, texts which teach that sacrifice without virtuous living is vain, but there are none which intimate that the sacrifices may be omitted. Everywhere the rites are insisted upon as important. China needs a St. Paul to reduce the rites to symbols and give an allegorical interpretation to the old ritual, and thus to substitute spiritual living for material offerings. But we must not be too exacting. The burning of incense is still practised in some Christian churches, and all retain the sacred meal of bread and wine. If it be true that

President Yüan has given up the burnt offering, he has already reduced the principal service to a sacred communion with the spirits, and there is no reason to doubt that in time the most objectionable features of the Confucian worship will be removed. The orchestral music, the paean of praise, and the prayer will remain. The worship of the dead even now to the highly educated means no more than our own memorial-day service does to us. The dead can no more detect the beauty and fragrance of the flowers than they can the flavor of the rice and wine. Above all, the excellent moral teaching of the Confucian sacred books will remain to inspire and to guide the young. The establishment of the public schools and the introduction of modern science must lead to a recognition of the world as a universe, ruled by one Divine Being, and thus the worship of the various powers of nature will die a natural death and be supplanted by the worship of Shang Ti alone.

Confucianism has always allowed the widest latitude in philosophical speculation. It has never formulated an authoritative creed. Its adherents, therefore, have no obstacle of this sort to prevent their acceptance of the conclusions of modern science. But the masses of China have never been satisfied with the intellectual recognition of God and His justice; they want something more consoling and hopeful. Hence they have supplemented their Confucianism with the mysticism and magic of Taoism and the comforting message of Buddhism, or, more properly, of that form of Buddhism which largely prevails in China — Amidism⁶, which professes faith in One almighty Ruler above all the Buddhas, and which directs the sorrowing and sinful to Amida-Buddha for help and salvation, and holds out the hope, not of an unconscious nirvana, but of immortality in a paradise of happiness in the western heaven.

⁶ The Ching T'u Sect referred to above.

The Chinese have the reputation of being indifferent to speculative thought, wanting in sentiment, and lacking in religious emotion; but the success of numerous native sects in Shantung and elsewhere shows that the people readily yield to religious appeals, and the gathering of multitudes in recent years to listen to the preaching of Christian evangelists is enough to prove that the struggle for bread has not entirely destroyed the hunger and thirst of the spirit.